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Letter dated 25 October 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to forward herewith the statement on the withdrawal of Rwandan troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the Third Party Verification Mechanism (TPVM) (see annex).

This statement is formal evidence against the negative propaganda pronounced by Leonard She Okitundu, the Foreign Affairs Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, on 24 October 2002 in the Security Council meeting. The total withdrawal of Rwanda Defence Forces was completed on 5 October 2002.

I would be grateful if this statement is published and circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Anastase **Gasana**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 25 October 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Statement on the withdrawal of Rwandan troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the Third Party Verification Mechanism (TPVM)

The TPVM together with MONUC was able to monitor the withdrawal of the Rwandan armed forces (RPA) from the East of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) into Rwanda. The different verifications teams were able to monitor the withdrawal of the troops with their military hardware from the different assembly points. The troops withdrew by air and by land and the teams were able to monitor their entry at the various border posts and airports.

The withdrawal process of the Rwandan Patriotic Army forces that started on the 17 September 2002, was completed on the 5 October 2002 when the last 1, 152 troops crossed of the Eastern DRC border post of Goma into Rwanda.

The formal event marking the completion of the withdrawal in Goma was witnessed by the TPVM, MONUC, JMC, and the diplomatic corps. The TPVM monitored the withdrawal of 20,593 troops in total. This number was 2,807 short of the total figure of 23,400 troops in the DRC as declared by the RPA Military Command.

The TPVM and MONUC requested an explanation for the discrepancy indicated above. A response was received formally two days later from the RPA that indicated that a total of 1925 soldiers on pass, 355 who were hospitalized, 436 were on training courses, 47 were in detention while 44 soldiers fell in battle.

TPVM can therefore confirm that all troops withdrew with their personal weapons and large quantities of ammunition. Heavier weaponry such as machine guns, rocket launchers, rocket propelled grenade launchers, rocket propelled grenade launchers and mortars, as well as armoured and other vehicles, anti-aircraft weapons which were also airlifted and monitored by our verification teams.

In accordance with the Pretoria Agreement and its Programme of Implementation in which the verification responsibility of the Third Party was spelt out, the TPVM wishes to state that the declared Rwandan figures and those withdrawn as verified, 23,400 have since left the territory of the DRC.

The TPVM would like to invite all interested parties who continue to make claims and allegations about the RPA troop withdrawal, to formally supply us with concrete and verifiable information on these allegations in writing and address them to the TPVM, and stop acting irresponsibly to further fan the flames of conflict in this region.